

NEWS RELEASE



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For Immediate Release

NEWS RELEASE SUMMARY - March 7, 2008

United States Attorney Karen P. Hewitt announced that Alfonso Zapien Carrillo was sentenced today in federal court in San Diego by the Honorable Jeffrey T. Miller to serve 55 months in custody for his conviction of conspiracy to bring in, transport, and harbor illegal aliens.

According to court records, Zapien entered a guilty plea pursuant to a plea agreement on June 30, 2000. He subsequently failed to appear for sentencing on September 25, 2000. The United States made a formal request for extradition of Zapien from Mexico on July 6, 2006. After Zapien's appeals were denied in Mexico, he was transported to the United States on June 19, 2007.

According to court documents, Zapien was originally arrested on November 17, 1999, after Border Patrol agents conducted an extensive investigation of houses suspected to be serving as "drop-houses" for smuggled aliens. Zapien subsequently admitted managing an alien smuggling organization and using a house

located in National City to harbor undocumented aliens prior to their transportation into the interior of the United States. Between May 1999 and November 1999, Zapien made initial smuggling arrangements with undocumented aliens in Mexico and then hired and paid several couriers to transport the aliens from Campo to the load house in National City. Zapien also maintained and dispatched vehicles to transport aliens from the Campo area.

During today's sentencing hearing, Judge Miller noted that Zapien had an aggravated role in the conspiracy as a leader and organizer, which justified a sentencing enhancement.

DEFENDANT

Case Number: 99CR3465-JM

Alfonso Zapien Carrillo

SUMMARY OF CHARGE

Title 8, United States Code, Section 1324(a)(1)(A)(i), (ii), (iii), and (v)(I) (Conspiracy to bring in, transport, and harbor illegal aliens)

AGENCY

Department of Homeland Security, Immigration and Customs Enforcement